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THE

ROYAL LAW OF LOVE;

OR,

LOVE IN RELATION TO LAW AND TO GOD.

The Baccalaureate Sermon

PREACHED BEFORE THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY,
JUNE 27, 1875.

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THE ROYAL LAW OF LOVE.

"*Love is the fulfilling of the law.*" — Rom. xiii. 10.

"*If ye fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well.*" — James ii. 8.

IN these passages there is a reference to three things, — to Love, to Law, and a King. I see before me an arch set up on earth, and spanning the heavens; the one side is Law, the other side is Love, and the key-stone binding and crowning the whole is God. Our theme is the Royal Law of Love. Let us contemplate Love and Law first separately, and then in their combination in God.

I. Love.

It may manifest itself in two forms, which should be carefully distinguished.

The Love of Complacency. We delight in the object or person beloved. It is thus that the mother clasps her infant to her bosom; thus that the sister interests herself in every movement of her little brother, and is proud of his feats; thus that the father, saying little but feeling much, follows the bright career of his son in the competitions of the college, and the still more trying rivalries of the world; thus that the student

seeks the society of his classmates, is grieved when he has to separate from them, and casts a fond look towards their coming career; thus that throughout our lives our hearts, if we have hearts, cling round the tried friends of our youth; thus that the wife would leave this world with her last look on her husband; thus that the father would depart with his sons and his daughters around his couch. There is a "last look which love remembers," that given, for instance, when the ship moves away with the dear friend in it, or when the soul leaves the earth to wing its way to heaven. Love looks out for the persons beloved. The mother soon discovers her son in that crowd; the blacksmith

> "Hears his daughter's voice
> Singing in the village choir."

The believer will steal away in fancy from the busy scenes of life to meet with his Saviour; and I am persuaded that when he reaches heaven he will recognize, without requiring to be told, the One whom he has so loved.

In a higher sphere and in an older age, even from the beginning, the love of God, of God who is love, was exercised in the fellowship of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; for the eternal Logos says, "I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him," and "my delights were with the sons of men" (Prov. viii. 30, 31). It has always appeared to me to be a very beautiful expression of that love that is given by the prophet Zephaniah (iii. 17), "He will rejoice over thee

with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing." "Likewise I say unto you there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." There were music and dancing in the house of the father when the prodigal returned. But Zephaniah, by a bolder representation than could have been employed by any but a Hebrew prophet, speaks of our Heavenly Father as so rejoicing over the return of sinners, — "I will joy over you with singing."

The Love of Benevolence. This is a higher form of love. In this we not only delight in the contemplation and society of the persons beloved: we wish well to them, we wish them all that is good. "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." We will oblige them if we can; we will serve them if in our power; we will watch for opportunities of promoting their welfare; we will make sacrifices for their good. This love is ready to flow forth towards relatives and friends, towards neighbors and companions, towards all with whom we come in contact: it will go out towards the whole family of mankind. We are ready to increase their happiness, and in the highest exercises of love to raise them in the scale of being, and to exalt them morally and spiritually.

The love of God thus manifests itself in multiplying happiness, in spreading holiness. He is not only Light, but the Fountain of lights; and the light that is in him, like that of the sun, shines on all around.

God is known by his works. He made us and not we ourselves. He provides for our wants; he cares for us, and is ready to guide and to comfort us. Higher than all, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Abraham saw all this in the mount which he called Jehovah-jireh, as it is said to this day, "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." He had been commanded to offer his son in sacrifice; he had travelled with him three whole days, exposed to such questions: "Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?" He had bound him on the altar, and taken up the knife to slay him; but now, to his inexpressible relief, he heard the voice, "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering in the stead of his son." Abraham must then have comprehended, and we, by paying a visit to that Mount of the Lord, can conceive, how great the love of God, who spared Isaac, but spared not his own Son, but gave him freely to the death in our room and stead. "Herein indeed is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

This second is the higher aspect of love. The other belongs in man to a lower department of his

nature. It is an exercise merely of emotional attachment, and may contain nothing virtuous or holy: it may be merely like the attachment of a dog to its master. The love of benevolence is of a higher sort: we wish to do good; we strive to do good to those whom we love. The one is like a genial heat in a closed apartment; the other is like a fire radiating on all around. The one is a lake, reflecting heaven on its bosom; the other is a fountain, welling up and carrying with it a refreshing influence. "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" It is this love of benevolence that is "the fulfilling of the law." It flows out in a great number and variety of forms: in compassion, in pity, in tenderness, in long-suffering, in patience. The high priest in old time wore a breastplate with twelve precious stones; but every true Christian is a priest, and carries on his breast a more ornamental tablet, thus described: "Charity suffereth long and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." Christians in this world of sin, sorrow, and suffering have a means of showing love, such as is not available to angels in the spotless mansions of heaven: they can and should, like their great Master, "bear

the contradiction of sinners," and should have compassion on the ignorant and on those who are gone out of the way."

But it may be asked, How can this benevolence be exhibited by us towards God, who is independent of us, and needs not our aid? The answer is, We identify ourselves with him, and strive to promote his glory, and the causes in which he is interested. We make it our prayer, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." True we have to say (Ps. xvi. 2, 3), "my goodness extendeth not to thee;" but we should add, "but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight," and in loving whom we feel that we are loving God.

These two forms of love, while they may be distinguished, should never be separated. But in fact they have often been divorced the one from the other. How often do men show the love of complacency, without the love of benevolence! They delight in the society of, and they receive gratification from, persons whom they do not seek to benefit. They do worse: they injure those to whom they are attached, as the ivy is apt to destroy the tree which it embraces and adorns. They do so by indulging, by flattering, by tempting them. The doting mother spoils the child whom she so fondles. The seducer ruins the unhappy one whom he clasps in his foul embrace. There is a love that is not lovely. It is, in fact, a refined form of selfishness. For our gratification and pleasure we lay hold of and hug to our bosoms objects which we only

corrupt. I apprehend that much of human sinfulness consists in tearing asunder what should be kept united, in selfishly delighting in persons, and turning them to our uses only to tempt and destroy them. It has often been remarked that the worst things are the perversion of good things. Abused intellectual gifts make the dangerous villain. Abused sensibilities make the accomplished tempter. Abused affections gender the keenest of all misery.

How terrible the chasms produced by sin in our world! That virtuous mother looks with unutterable horror upon the conduct of her drunken son; yet she would die for him at any moment, provided she could thereby save him. Nay, has not sin by its dissevering and destructive power kept asunder in a sense what had ever before been united in the mind of God? It has been disputed among theologians whether God can love or be a father to sinners yet in their sins. The distinction I have drawn solves the question. I cannot very well see how God should look on the sinner with complacency. "God is angry with the wicked every day" (Ps. vii. 11). "I hate them with perfect hatred" (Ps. cxxxix. 22). But, on the other hand, he loves the sinner; loves him with an everlasting love; he loves him with the love of compassion. "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, O Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together." In a like way our Lord was the friend of publicans and sinners; not that he approved of their conduct, — he

reprobated it more than the Pharisee did, who turned away from them in scorn, — but he wept over the coming doom on Jerusalem; and his very purpose in coming to this world was to seek and save that which is lost. In this, as in every other particular, we are to copy him who has set us an example that we should follow his steps. It is not expected of us that we should have pleasure in the society of the licentious, the selfish, the malignant: but we are to feel for them; as human beings we are to pity them, and seek to allure them to God and to good.

II. Law.

Law was in the nature of God from all eternity, and is the instrument of his government: it was inscribed on the nature of man when he was created; it was graven by God's own finger on the granite blocks of Sinai; it was spoken in gentle and attractive tones by our Lord, in the Sermon on the Mount, and it is written by God's own Spirit as a new commandment on the hearts of God's people. It goes with man wherever he goes, to tell him, if he is prepared to listen to it, what is right and what is wrong, and in the end to punish him if he refuses to obey. It is so essential a part of his nature, that it will follow him into the regions below, to torment him more than the worm that never dies, than the fire that is not quenched.

That law has been broken, but is still binding. When Moses came down from the Mount with the two tables, he threw them from him, and broke them,

when he witnessed the wickedness of the children of Israel. But he had just to reascend to the Mount and have them written again by God's own finger. Which thing may be unto us for an allegory. Man has broken God's law ; but that law retains all its claims, and ever renews them. The law is embodied in the gospel. All this was instructively represented in the ark of the covenant, laid up in the holiest of all, and typifying the new covenant. On the lid of it were the cherubim, overshadowing the blood-sprinkled mercy-seat ; and the promise was given : "There will I meet with thee, and commune with thee on the mercy-seat from between the cherubim." But within the ark were the two tables of stone. Christ came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil. The gospel, wherever it goes, carries within it the law fulfilled by Christ, the law still binding on his followers. There is a sense in which believers are free from the law ; they are free from its curse : but in another sense they are still under it ; they are not free from the obligation to obey it. When sinners come to Christ he welcomes them ; he says, Your sins be forgiven you ; but he does not give them liberty to go back to their sins, but, "go and sin no more." Just as the father, after rejoicing over the return of his prodigal son, took him into his house to keep him in safety, so our Heavenly Father takes us into his family to train us to obedience. When the sinner comes to Christ, Christ pays his debts, but it is only to send him to pay his dues, not in the oldness of the letter, but the newness of the spirit. In heaven itself, the soul, brought into

unison with the law of love, will be fulfilling it to perfection: and the music of heaven will consist essentially in attuned hearts, each breathing its own melody, and all in harmony; hearts in accord with the heart of God and in accord with one another, and fulfilling the pleasure of God for ever and ever.

The law has two marked features.

It is Imperative. It speaks as one having authority: it speaks in the name of God. It says, "Thou shalt do this, thou shalt not do that." "The Categorical Imperative" was the designation given it by the great German metaphysician. Its function is not to tell us what is, but what ought to be. All its affirmations are commands; all its negations are prohibitions. It has rewards rich and numerous for those who obey it. It has penalties, certain and terrible, for those who transgress it. God has a vicegerent to sustain it, in the conscience, "which shows the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another." There is a witness within, which constrains us to acknowledge its right to obedience.

It is Determinative. It is categorical; it has its definite requirements which it cannot forego, and will not lower. "Guilty or not guilty," are the alternatives it proposes. It admits of no middle course or compromise; it accepts of no excuse; it will not listen to any plea or extenuation.

In this respect, the order, the regularities, of the physical world resemble it. Hence for the last two

hundred years they have been called laws, laws of nature, as supposed to have been enacted by a law-giver. It is interesting to notice that they are called "ordinances" in Scripture (Ps. cxix. 91). "They continue this day according to thine ordinances, for all are thy servants." We hear much in these times of the laws of nature, of their being so fixed and immutable. Those who speak in this way are apt to forget that there is another law which is still more unchangeable, and shall abide when the heavens are rolled up like a scroll. It is by these two kinds of law, the one Moral, the "greater light," and the other Natural, "the lesser light," that God rules our world, — by the one moral agents, by the other physical agents, — making them all combine and conspire towards one good and grand end.

In one respect the two are alike: both are inflexible. But they differ. The laws of nature admit of no exceptions. They cannot be changed except by Him who appointed them. The will of man cannot arrest them. Gravitation is as ready to bring down an unsupported stone to crush us, as it is to keep the earth moving on beneficently in its sphere. The winds which drive on the vessel one day, may sink it in the deep the next. The chemical affinities which prepare food to nourish us are ready to mix poison to kill us. On the other hand, moral laws may be broken. We are now in the region of the will. In order to be a moral agent man must be a free agent. Love that is constrained is not love. Morality compelled is not true morality. So moral law may be broken, while

physical law cannot. But moral law, properly understood, is quite as inflexible, as unrelenting, as natural law. If we neglect the laws of health, the consequences may be disease or death. But if we violate the laws of morality, the consequences may be, must be, much more fatal in a condemning conscience, or in judgments to descend in this life or the life to come. Natural law, which moves on so regularly, so irresistibly, so beneficently, is the fittest outward type and emblem of that moral law which rules the heaven and controls the earth.

III. Relation of Love and Law in God.

The planet is held in its sphere by two influences; one impelling, the other staying it. So it is with moral beings: they are drawn by love, but it is love regulated by law. It is well that the earth should have an attraction towards the sun, without which it would wander into an outer region of coldness, darkness, and destruction; but were there no restraining power it would be drawn into the sun's atmosphere, and be consumed by his heat. In like manner, moral excellence implies of necessity these two things, love and law; the one to attract, the other to guide in the right path.

It is not easy to embody in human conceptions, and to express in human language, the relation of law and love. We know that the two are closely connected. Their connection is in God, the source of both. Even as God is the origin of all other things, of nature, of force, of matter, of mind, so is he also the origin of

love and law. All these streams, if we follow them up sufficiently far, carry us to the fountain. Love is the refreshing water; the law is the channel for it to flow in; and the spring is in the bosom of God. "Let us love one another, for love is of God." Charity is the highest of all the graces: "There abideth these three, faith, hope, and charity; but the greatest of these is charity." But then charity never tries to set itself above law; if it did so, it might work only mischief. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Love takes the form of a commandment. When asked by the lawyer, "Which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; this is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Thus indissolubly are charity and commandment joined in Scripture. It is love that makes us like unto God, who is love; but the love of God is a love regulated by eternal justice.

We cannot by any process of analysis get rid of either of these elements. Defective systems of ethics arise from omitting one or other, or not giving each its due place. A stoic, a pharisaic morality leaves out love, and presents only the expressionless form of law. Utilitarianism leaves out eternal and unchangeable obligation, and offers a flexible morality, suiting itself to supposed results. My illustrious predecessor, Jonathan Edwards, the greatest thinker

that this country has produced, in whose dazzling beams the others of us appear merely as the smaller planets passing over the disc of the sun, has made a bold attempt to resolve all virtue into love. But then he has to make it love to being as being. The very statement shows that there is another element as well as love. There is love to *being as being*, showing that being has claims, and that there must be some means of determining the claims of being as being. We ought to love God and our neighbor. Yes, but whence this word "ought" so full of meaning? Why should I love any one but myself? Our deepest nature gives the response, and will continue to do so, whether we attend to it or no. All this implies that alongside of love there is law, commanding and demanding. Far as the eye can reach, the two are seen to run parallel. I do not say that they never meet, for they meet in the nature of God and of all holy beings. And, though often dissevered here, they will meet at last in the character of saints in heaven, with whom love will be law, and law will be love.

"What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." There is no propriety in drawing invidious comparisons as to the relative importance of the two. It might be argued that law is the higher; for it commands love, says when it is to flow, and where it is to stay. But then love is the very end for which the law exists: the end of the commandment is charity. Law without love is a mere form without life: love without law is a life without a body in which to reside. Law without love is a channel with-

out a stream; love without law may be a stream, bursting forth and spreading destruction. Let the two revolve round each other like binary stars, each with its own color, the one the complement of the other. Let Righteousness stand for ever on the pedestal on which he has been set up, with his high look and unbending mien, the master and the guardian; and ever beside him, beneath him, and leaning upon him, yet beautiful and graceful as he, let there be seen Love, with smiles upon her face and gifts in her hands.

I believe they were never separated till sin appeared. Alas, that seducer and corrupter has severed them! There has arisen a stern doctrine, which has no tenderness; whose gaze is as unmoved and unmovable as that of the Egyptian sphinx, looking out from its desert of sand. If there be theologians still dwelling in a cold palace of ice, I recommend them to let the beams of the sun of righteousness shine upon it and thaw it. I look upon the Shorter Catechism as the best compend of Scripture truth which we have in any language; but I have sometimes felt that there is less of love in it than there is in the Scriptures, and that it serves a good end when the teacher puts a smile upon its countenance to attract the youth who has to learn it. It was rather an empty ark which they had to look into in Solomon's time, when they found nothing there but the tables of stone, and not their accompaniments, — Aaron's rod that budded, signifying life from the dead; nor the pot of manna, typifying food for the weak. But the defect I am now speaking of belongs rather

to the seventeenth than the nineteenth century. We are now more in danger of a sentimental and a simpering faith, acting the part of a Delilah, professing love to the man who boasts that he is strong, only in the end to show how weak he is, and to consign him to blindness and darkness. Let us have charity, they say: but charity without principle to guide it may distribute its gifts very indiscriminately and injuriously. Let us have fire, they insist: but we cannot have fire without fuel to feed it, and fire cannot be allowed to burn and consume in every place, and as it pleases. While the sun has a photosphere to radiate its beneficent influence, it has also a solid body to keep up the supply of heat and light. There should be a vessel to contain the pleasant incense that we offer, otherwise it will soon dissipate into inanity.

By all means let us make our religion attractive, as attractive as the character of Jesus. But Jesus came to fulfil the law and the prophets; and, while he allowed the woman that was a sinner to bathe his feet with her tears, he drove out those who polluted his temple, made those fall back who assailed him. And we read of what I suppose is the most terrible thing in the universe, "the wrath of the Lamb." It is doubtless to this that reference is made when it is said that "our God is a consuming fire." If we would make love fulfil its divine mission, we must associate with it the eternal truth with which it is combined in the Word. Let us never allow ourselves to suppose that we can improve the Scriptures by shearing off some pointed truths supposed to be offensive. Let

the sun shine there in the heavens in all its brightness, even though it should dazzle our eyes: we need all its light to show us the way in which we should walk; the plants need all its heat to mature and to ripen them. There are statements in that Word of which I wished, as I remember, in the petulance of youth, that they had not been there. But I have been made by experience, often bitter, to see the truth and awful importance of them. Whether we see it now or no, all believers will see in the end that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

There is a theology known as the Princeton theology, defended by good and great men, some of them now seeing the truth still more clearly in the mansions above, but some of them still spared to us. It is in fact simply the Reformation theology. It is the theology of Paul in all his epistles. If any of us have in any respect fallen beneath the spirit of Jesus and of the Word, let us acknowledge our fault and amend; but we dare not meanwhile abandon the truth which has been held so firmly and defended so ably among us. If any of us have been supercilious, saying, "Stand by, for I am holier than thou," let us hasten to bow ourselves at the feet of Jesus, and learn of him to be meek and lowly. If any have allowed their orthodoxy, like the frost, to cover over and cool their humanity, let them place their hearts under the beams of him who "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and

the good, and sendeth his rain on the just and the unjust," and their systems will be better. But, whatever improvement we may make in cultivating and cherishing the spirit of charity, there is one thing we can never do, and that is, to lower the standard of doctrine or of duty. Amidst the shiftings of human fancy and speculation which spring up and wither like the grass, the Princeton theology, like the Word of God on which it is founded as on a rock, "endureth for ever."

It is true that there have been men who have preached or practised a pharisaic morality; that is, a law without love. A law has been set forth and enforced which is not the law of love, and has driven men away from God, who is love, and from the gospel, which is essentially a message of reconciliation from God to sinful man. The terrors of the law have been used, not as by Paul to persuade men, but to tempt or drive them to rebellion or resistance. In ages past law has been used lawlessly by monarchs and by masters. But in the present day the tendency seems all the other way. If there were tyrannies in old-world monarchies which we in these times are not slow to condemn, there is licentiousness in new-world republics which it might be as useful and important for us to expose and condemn. People were rather astonished when not long ago the preacher of a great university took as his text on a public occasion, "Thou shalt not steal." But he was speaking the truth for the time now present, which needs the commandments to be proclaimed as awfully as they were at Sinai, to arrest the corruptions of individuals and of rings. Some

think that preachers in these times might profitably take as their text, "Honor thy father and thy mother." If fathers erred two centuries ago in being somewhat too rigid with their children, it is possible that in these times they may not be sufficiently faithful in restraining self-indulgence, and in training to habits of self-sacrifice. If some preachers, in ages gone by, preached hell and damnation instead of Christ, it is possible that some in these times are so relaxed by a weak charity that they have not the courage or faithfulness to bid men flee from the wrath to come. If there have been preachers in certain ages who insisted on nothing but stern duty, there are not a few in our day who recommend love without the due restraints of law, who are tampering with the marriage relation, lowering the sacredness of wedlock, and allowing such liberty of divorce as is fitted to break up the family, — which, I may remark, is the only means of securing proper moral culture, and training the rising generation to virtue. More evil may arise from lawless love, which is fascinating, than from hatred, which is repulsive. So we have no intention here in Princeton of changing the truths of God's Word, on the miserable pretence of making them softer and more lovable than God has made them in his Word.

There is a teaching in our day antagonistic to the Princeton theology. It can scarcely be called a theology. It does not take, it cannot be made to take, any scientific form. It would let down doctrine and exalt charity, and would thereby make religion easier and more attractive, — as they suppose. It is "Broad

Church" in England, delivering itself from all creed. It is the "Religion of Humanity," in this country, instead of the "Religion of Divinity for Humanity." It would free humanity from certain restraints and sacrifices with the view of exalting it. It is not just the same, but it is analogous to the attempt in the last century to do away with doctrine on the pretence of exalting morality, and which led to dry High Churchism in England, to Moderatism in Scotland and Ulster, to Rationalism on the Continent of Europe, and to Unitarianism in this country; and ended in all in the decay of religion and the lowering of morality. The new gospel which has appeared among us is evidently running a like career. Doctrine is discarded first; duty goes next, in the next man or the next age.

It is a profound saying of one of the brothers Hare: "To form a correct judgment concerning the tendency of any doctrine, we should rather look at the forms it bears in the disciples than in the teacher. *For he only made it: they are made by it.*" We may now see the kind of characters that are made in this school of love and humanity. There was first a turning away from the old doctrine, and this has been followed by a turning away from the old morality. I beg that it may be understood that I have no reference to any one individual; and that I enter on no doubtful or disputed points. I proceed, on what is visible to all, on what, indeed, has been forced offensively on the attention of all. The feeling of many of us is, "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; into their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united." Notwith-

standing all the efforts to suppress the "secret," awful disclosures have been made. We see how the milk of human kindness, when not restrained by law, is apt to be soured into hatred, how humanity sinks into selfishness. We see how perilous it is to begin to tamper with the most sacred of all earthly relations. It looks as if the generation now springing up needed to know what sort of "assembly" or society has been formed among us, and what the practical consequences of the sentiment passing current in the circle. The young needed to know what kind of men are seeking to guide opinion in the public press, even the so-called religious press; men who keep no sabbath, but work on it as on other days; who go to no place of worship, who are supposed to be capable of teaching others while they have abandoned the religion which is the basis of ethics, and ridicule the holy doctrine which they know condemns them. The watchmen who are set on thy walls, O Jerusalem, need to proclaim, as loud as when seven thunders utter their voices, that love is to be guided by law, that love cannot excuse lying, whether to shelter the persons themselves or others; that in contradictory statements there must be lying, and that in contradictory oaths there must be perjury of the deepest dye, offensive in the highest degree to God, and to be denounced with terrible reprobation by man.

Our general subject leads me to remark that in Princeton College we seek to combine affection with discipline. In not a few of our larger colleges, the

authorities have virtually abandoned all attempts to exercise any oversight except in the way of securing order in the recitation rooms, and students may and often do fall into vicious habits without their instructors having any knowledge of it, or the parents having any hint of it, till it is too late. But surely it is a very serious matter to separate hundreds of young men from the restraints of home, and then take no charge of them religiously and morally. It is a very difficult task, I acknowledge, to combine these two things, love and faithfulness. I do not venture to affirm that we have perfectly succeeded: that, on the one hand, we have always shown as much sympathy and tenderness as we should; or that, on the other hand, we have been firm enough in repressing evil. But I can say for the authorities of this college that we have been anxious to do what is right. So far from discouraging innocent amusement and manly sports, we provide them, and keep them under proper regulations as to hours. We frown on studious insubordination and vice, on every form of equivocation or lying, and on practices which degrade those who engage in them. It will be admitted by all who know our state that we have now got rid of nearly all the old practices that have disgraced American colleges, and that no professor remembers a year in which we have had so much quietness and propriety of conduct, and so much mutual confidence on the part of the faculty and students.

In teaching other high branches we aim to impart religious instruction. I feel this to be a difficult work

in a large college with young men of such varied character, some of them with as yet no taste for spiritual things. But we hold that the mind is not furnished as it ought, if, on opening to our students the riches of literature, science, and philosophy, we do not make them acquainted with the character and will of God. But this can be done only by the Scriptures: I know of no other religious instruction which can be of any value practically. So I labor to take the students through the Bible in a general way in our collegiate course of four years. This last year I have been expounding the doctrines of the Word, with the Epistle to the Romans as our text-book. Here we have a full and perfect combination of doctrine and precept, of law and love. Those versed in this portion of Scripture should be in a position to form a correct judgment on all subjects religious and moral, and are in possession of a body of principles fitted to stimulate them to what is good, and to hold them back from what is evil. We believe that by imparting such instruction, not only do we best serve the cause of our great Master, but are taking the most effective means to train for work and usefulness the young committed to our care by anxious parents and guardians.

Gentlemen of the Graduating Class, — I have been associated with most of you very closely for the last four years. During this time, besides praying with you from day to day in the chapel, and lecturing to you and occasionally preaching to you on the Sabbath, I have met with you as a class once a week for

Bible instruction. During one year I had a meeting with you once a week for the study of the human mind, and with a portion of you during another for the study of the history of philosophy. These meetings were pleasant at the time, and the remembrance of them will be precious. I realize it as a very serious thought that I have now to part with you. I have this day to inquire whether I have done my duty as I ought towards you; whether I have been sufficiently faithful on the one hand and sufficiently tender on the other. I feel more deeply than I can express that I have lost opportunities of doing good which I should have embraced, and that I have not been so sympathetic as I ought in my expositions and in my counsels. But I bless God because he has given me a glorious opportunity of bringing before you great truths both in religion and philosophy; and my prayer to God and to you is that you now take them with you and use and apply them in your beliefs and your actings in the varied scenes of life, overlooking any imperfections that may have mingled with my exposition of them.

I feel as I had left much unsaid which I should have said; but the omission cannot be rectified by trying to say it now. All I can now do is to pray that "what is sown in weakness may be raised in power." Perhaps some of the things I have said may come up before you once and again to animate and establish you; some of the sparks may kindle a fire; some of the seeds scattered may strike root. You have certainly received valuable instruction from the

able, the faithful and laborious teachers under whom you have sat in this college; and we cherish the hope that the knowledge gained, the habits formed, the principles instilled, the virtues acquired, may be so wrought into your nature and incorporated into your being that they shall come out in your general aims and purposes, in your character and professional work.

I would send you forth from these walls with these two words "love" and "law" written as a motto on your hearts. The one will be a well of living waters within you, ever springing up and refreshing you, and ready to flow out. Most of you have now to set out on a hard struggle, in which you have to provide for your temporal wants. But I will be greatly disappointed if I hear of you living for mere personal and selfish ends. I knew a young man who devoted his first hard-won earnings to purchase a gift for his mother: he had his mother's prayers, and he rose to eminence. I knew another youth who consecrated his first money to a missionary cause. He lived to be one of the great missionaries of our age. There is a beautiful incident told of the greatest benefactor which our college has had in this century. The young man in his first business transaction had earned some three thousand dollars. What is he to do with it? to spend it on pleasures, or lay it up as a fund for establishing a business? There is a kind family that had befriended him, but is now in circumstances of privation. He offers it all to them. It required strong faith to do this. But, after all, he made a

wise disposition of his money. He lent to the Lord, and so had the best security. The boy did all this from principle, and with no idea of gaining a reputation; but he established a character of far more value than gold even for the purpose of gaining gold. To the individual who thus began life we owe these magnificent buildings and these professors' chairs, which will be the means of shedding light for untold generations. We send you forth from these walls, where you have received benefit from the bounty of benefactors, to spread light and love, to diffuse around you a happy and a hallowed influence, to rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep. You will seek in your spheres to advance education, to promote refinement, and to lead in all movements which further literature and science. Your Alma Mater expects more: she expects you to promote the highest good, which is spiritual good. A number, I know, are to devote themselves to what they believe to be the highest work a converted man can engage in, and as ministers and as missionaries are to scatter everywhere the unsearchable riches of Christ.

But while love gives the steam and the sails in the voyage, you will always take with you moral principle as the anchor and the rudder. You will shrink from the temptation to evil, from the appearance of evil; you will turn back when you come near the border country that divides vice from virtue. "By reason of use you will have your senses exercised to discern both good and evil." In the end, duty as a whole will be felt to be pleasant as being wrought into your very

nature. On certain occasions a strong effort will require to be made; but you will gird yourselves for the battle, wax valiant in the fight, and be stronger for the victory. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise," you will think on these things and do them.

This time of graduation constitutes an epoch in your history. You have come to an eminence whence you look back on the past and forward to the future. In surveying the past, you may have to rejoice over successes; but beware of trusting in them. You gained these by application, and you will need the like application in the more arduous career on which you have now to enter. Quite as possibly you may have to look on failures, perhaps great failures; time and opportunities of improvement lost. Surely your purpose this day will be to let nothing more be lost: you will gather lessons from your very disappointments. You have also to look forward to the future which you see stretching out before you; and you make this a profitable Sabbath in forming resolutions and laying out plans. See that they include plans of doing good, and that they all be undertaken in a sense of dependence on divine wisdom.

We will follow you in this career on which you are entering with some anxiety, but with greater hope. We pray for your happiness; but we pray more earnestly for your higher good, for the blessings of heaven to water the fruits of earth. While we remember you,

we expect you to remember us ; to visit us from time to time ; to pray for us, and help us to promote the great ends which this college lives to accomplish. Thus, while scattered, it may be, widely, you shall all be one in the family relation to your Alma Mater.

The last tie that binds you to this institution is soon to be loosed, and you have to set out on a voyage on which there may be more or fewer tossings. But two things abide and are stronger than the wind or the steam that drive you along, and firmer than the compass or the anchor. One is love in the heart, love more enduring than life, and which will not die when the body dies ; the other is law, which like the arms of the Omnipotent, will guard you for ever.

Met as we are this day for the last time as a band of brothers in the house of God, let us arrange, ere we part, another meeting place to which we may all come. Let us pledge ourselves, in the presence of God and of one another, that, whatever our separations, that wherever else we meet, or whether we meet again on earth or no, we will all meet, no wanderer lost, in the presence of God in heaven.

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